No. 4.

The Skeptic of The First Century asked

"What s Truth?"

The Skeptic of The Twentieth Century asks

"Where is Truth?"

The Light of all The Centuries answers

"I am the Truth"

"The Spirit of Truth....will guide you into ***All Truth.***"

"What is Truth?"

Where is Truth?"

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MY DEAR SIR:

You, with very many others, have asked me questions which I now sit down to answer, but I must ask you to allow me to deal in this communication with more than one of the matters which have been presented to me.

I shall take up your question:

FIRST. "Has any answer been given to the enquiry made in the latter portion of your letter of the 11th of last February, addressed to Chancellor Burwash? Many of us have been looking for the outcome and are most desirous of knowing what is the position taken by those to whom you refer in our Theological Colleges. The matter has gone so far that it cannot be allowed to remain where it stands at present. It is well to have peace in our church, but not peace at any price. I fully concur in the motto which heads one of your pamphlets: 'The wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable.'

"Let me know the answer of the Higher Critics in our city to the request made as to what the man-Bible should contain? We laymen do not want general statements and will not be satisfied unless detailed answers are given to the questions which you aptly asked."

My dear sir, we have no persons in our city worthy of the name of Higher Critics. We have only second rate copyists and repeaters of Hegel, Strauss, Baur, Haeckel, Wellhausen and the like; but such as they are they have made no answer. When it is made I should almost fear to send one of these critics to you with it, for I believe that if they presented it to you

in all the naked deformity of their Destructive Criticism as shown in the quotations in my third pamphlet that there would be a breach of the peace as in righteous indignation you cried out,

"Avaunt hobgoblin and take thy miscreated form athwart my path, lest strange horrors seize thee."

A truthful answer to this question will never be given as it would display at once the enormous differences between the Professors' Bible and the Word of God and demonstrate the reality of the struggle that is now going on and the danger from which Christians are asking God to preserve His Church.

SECOND. You ask me a question which may be subdivided as follows:

(a) "How is it that the attacks on our Bible come chiefly from our clergymen, professors in our colleges and schools, and who are there placed and paid to expound this book and not to attack it or explain it away."

(b) Is it the duty of the laity to stand quietly by and see this work proceed and aid financially these institutions since they have made it public that such work is being and will continue to be carried on, or is it their duty to refuse further financial assistance until the Word of God as it stands be duly recognized as the impregnable rock?

(c) A large body of laymen desire, by meetings in Massey Hall and other places, to give the expression of their views in order to help to end this work of infidelity which dishonours God, disparages His word, and degrades man. I have been surprised that no action of the kind has hitherto been taken. The Bible is especially the book of the laymen. In old days it gave them their education and their freedom. They must not be untrue to it. It brought light. Its removal will bring darkness. A superintendent of

one of the churches spoke out like a man and he was howled upon by those who would not only have said "crucify him" but in the first century would have carried their malediction into effect. One Bishop of the Church of England—all honour to him for so doing—gave public utterance to his belief in God's Word. Will you preside if a meeting is called? I want yes or no and no higher critic generalities."

I believe the answer to (a) is that, although, thank God, the large body of our Christian laymen and laywomen are still true to God's Word, the education of our clergymen in most of our Theological Colleges has been for over thirty years unsound. That the teachings of the evolutionists and the rationalists have blinded their eyes to the "irrationalism of infidelity." That the truths of the Bible have been misinterpreted. That the finished work of Christ does not occupy the position that it did in early days—that colleges have been more anxious to get clever men as Professors than men sound in the faith, and that as a result the old-time standards of our churches, the old-time faith, the old-time belief in God's Word brought home by God's Holy Spirit as the means of accomplishing the work of the Church, are largely passing away from the halls of our Theological Schools. Our younger men like the liberty degenerating into license found in so many of their teachers and under their guidance adopt the "new views," "modern thought," and these students in time replace their teachers and so our colleges are honeycombed by the prophets that prophesy lies. "Yea, they are prophets of the deceit of their own heart," but thank God that it has not yet come to the point that "my people love to have it so." When a Professor is found to be false to the doctrinal

teaching in the college in which he is placed if he be a clever man the managers of the institution are afraid to dismiss him lest some of the pupils whom he has misled and made his followers should leave the college, and therefore the authorities temporize and slur over the unsoundness in their Professor.

As to (b) I state emphatically that when a layman or laywoman ascertains the unfaithful teaching in a college or school of which they are supporters it is their duty to protest, and that if notwithstanding the protest it be continued they make themselves co-workers in the evil wrought if they aid financially in such an institution.

As to (c) I answer you emphatically, Yes, I will. I think it the duty of the laity to take this matter up. I shall gladly attend any such meeting and if I have strength a series of such meetings; but I suggest that in the first place, believing in the power of prayer, there should be formed in each body prayer circles to ask God for the conversion of all these professors and of those who have the regulating of their appointments; and if these earnest prayers be not answered in the conversion of these men then that they should be dismissed and others "full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom" should replace them.

The churches must not be afraid of the loss of a little money by such action. In doing our duty to the Lord He will make up the needed silver and gold. This action of the Professors in our schools and colleges has done more to emphasize the material and to sink the Spiritual than aught else. How the Spiritual side used to be emphasized fifty years ago. The Bible,

as we had it, comes from God, to whom it lifts us up. It opens the way to that Heaven whither His Son has gone to prepare a place for us.

The sun needs no light whereby to see it.

The positive truths of God's Word are all in itself and the Spirit of the living God that wrote it irradiates the spirit of man so that the God-given message is absolutely received.

Take away this spiritual atmosphere and you replace it by the material—unbelief, a neglected Bible which soon becomes a rejected Bible—the world, its pomps and vanities, riches, luxury, place, power, display, immortality and all such like evils which flow from the material atmosphere—and the motto becomes "Let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die." How utterly opposed to the quiet life of the Godly Christian whose motto is "Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with Thy God."

THIRD. **I entirely agree in your conclusion that "no reasonable man fairly looking at the result of the work of the Higher or Professorial Critics in regard to God, to man and to God's Word can arrive at any conclusion other than that the result has occasioned, where received, a great lowering or degradation of man."**

His high place in the creation, and the splendid standard given up to which he was to live, have been lowered to the monkey-brand of the evolutionists; and the splendid standard set him in the Word of the Living God, and the power given him to live up to such standard therein found have been reduced to a discredited emasculated human production, which can-

not command respect, and has no transforming or vitalizing power.

An ape-man will scarcely need a book of as high a type for his information and guidance as the man God created in His own image. Thus the College Professors working together in couples, depreciate man and, as a not unnatural consequence, seek to deprive him of his God-given food, which then becomes unnecessary.

The Supreme Being in His history brings man into this wonderful relationship with Him:

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him."

"And breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."

The father of evolution, Dr. Darwin, in his last edition of "The Descent of Man," thus brings him into existence:

"The early prognitors of man must have been once covered with hair, both sexes having beards; their ears were probably pointed and capable of movement; and their bodies were provided with a tail, having the proper muscles."

"Whether primeval man, when he possessed but few arts, and those of the rudest kind, and when his power of language was extremely imperfect, would have deserved to be called 'man,' must depend on the definition which we employ. In a series of forms graduating insensibly from some ape-like creature to man as he now exists, it would be impossible to fix on any definite point when the term 'man' ought to

be used. But this is a matter of very little importance''!

Probably the man-critics, after consultation with the Bible-critics, came to the conclusion that God's Word was too good for the man thus evolutionized, and, working in harmony the Biblical critics proceeded to produce a book which they thought more fitting to the capacity of the monkey-brand of man; and so eliminated the God-like portions of God's Word from the book which He gave us. Let all Christians, however, gladly accept of the high and holy position in which God originally placed us ''created in the image of God,'' who ''breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,'' and thus ''man became a living soul.'' And let us with equal joy demand the food which He has provided for these souls as, ''man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.'' Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4.

Using the language of our blessed Lord to the tempter, even although he be transformed into an angel of light, as a Higher Critic or a College Professor, we may well say ''get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God but those that be of men.''

It must ever be borne in mind that the unbelief of the Higher Critic and his refusal to accept the Word of God on faith is strong evidence of the truth of that Word. The dealing of our blessed Lord with His unbelieving apostle evidences this. The incident was written not merely as a reproof to one of the twelve, but for instruction and edification to-day where they seek to walk by sight and not by faith, and where

they refuse to accept teaching in spiritual matters unless "common-sense" is convinced. "Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed." John 20:29.

And again, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."

And therefore if such matters "are foolishness" to the splendid intellect of a Huxley or a Darwin, how much more must they be to those who claim to be their followers although, longo intervallo, and declaim on commemoration days on the platforms of our Theological Colleges.

On the other hand, how many millions are there today who rejoice in the Bible as the inspired Word of the Living God. They have no doubts upon these points. They have no difficulties in these matters. They "know them because they are spiritually discerned." They therefore rejoice as they humbly and heartily join in the time-honored Collect of the Church:

"Bless . . Lord, who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to . . written for our learning; Grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that by patience, and comfort of Thy Holy Word, we may embrace, and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen."

How cruel it is for the Professor with a thin veneering of second-class science and without any skill in

weighing evidence to seek to endeavor to shake the confidence of such humble believer in his faith.

It is an insult to the intelligence of a rational being for a Higher Critic to say "I do not shake your faith, I strengthen it." "I do not impair your Bible, I better it." Why should the process taken to discredit any other volume be heralded as a means of building up the Scriptures? The very name that is given to the action of the Higher Critic shows what is its aim and object, and, in what it so often succeeds in accomplishing—"Destructive Criticism." How can it be said that a process whereby you seek to show that a book is from beginning to end historically untrue—that where it assumes to give you facts it is filled with fiction, and such glaring absurdities that the mind should revolt against them—that the authors dishonestly endeavor to palm off the book as written at dates which were absolutely untrue and which were given in order to deceive—that there are introduced, in order to gain credence, a number of miraculous events which never took place, which are easy of explanation and were only inserted to endeavor to give a coloring of greatness to so[illegible] of the principal characters that are introduced int[illegible] ne volume, is a vindication of the Bible and enables the critic to claim credit from sane Christians for his work!! If in any historical work which is to-day generally credited one tithe of all that is presented against the Bible by these men was found to be true the book would be absolutely discredited and be relegated to the dust-heap or used for purposes of illumination in the kitchen. It is time the Higher Critic should drop

the large measure of hypocrisy that appears in the writings of so many and come into the open and play the game fairly. Their great object is to make a new Bible. Let us all understand this distinctly. It is a question whether Christian people will insist upon retaining God's Word for the Church and her children or permit the introduction of the Higher Critic's or Professor's Bible. Do not let us be misled by any mistake on this point. That which is taking place in our midst has reached, one sees with deepest regret, the citadel of orthodoxy in the Presbyterian Church, Princeton. Under the pretext of explaining, improving, bettering, making more easy of comprehension, vindicating, etc., the enemy has gradually passed all the outposts and is now laying seige to the citadel or inner-keep the centre of our religion the Lord Jesus Christ.

I have recently read what took place at the Pan-Anglical Congress last year in London and was much struck with many of the addresses made by some of the first minds in England. Although it does not immediately touch the subject of your letter, yet I thought that it might be useful to transcribe some quotations from the most material statements in order to strengthen those who may be carried away with the take-it-for-granted-method of the opponents of the Bible who would seek to rush you into durance vile if you dare even to suggest that possibly they are taking too much for granted and may be wrong. I was much struck with a statement of

THE REV. E. M'CLURE,

of the Society for the Promotion of Christian knowledge.

He "believed that there had never been a time in which literature had come to such a low pass as in the first years of the reign of Edward VII. Why was that? It must be ascribed, to some extent, to the fact that their traditions had become shaken and their ideals lowered by the destructive criticism of the times."

This gentleman has great opportunity—through his connection with this society—to give an utterance worthy of deep consideration on this question. It will be a bad day for us intellectually and morally if we permit this great heritage of the English people which under God raised her to the high position of the Victorian age to be cut to pieces under the profane penknife of the critic. If we do so we shall be responsible to God and may be painfully reminded of our breach of duty by it may be the earthquake, the sword, or the pestilence.

BISHOP WELLDON,

a name known in all parts of the world, states "that he was not moved by any dread of criticism or any fanaticism for the Bible, in holding that a great part of the so-called higher criticism of the Bible was scientifically false. It sometimes surprised him that the critics were not more modest than they were, seeing how often they, or their predecessors had been proved to be wrong. Dr. Salmon, in his latest work, stated that when he entered upon the study of theology the field of criticism of the new Testament was occupied by the school of Baur. He who was not a follower of Baur was supposed to be an ignorant or prejudiced person; but what had become of the school of Baur

now? He put it to the meeting that the theories of the Tübingen school, as relating to the New Testament in general, had been rejected, and as relating to the Gospels they had been practically reversed. He pleaded for critical modesty. There were critics to-day who had so nearly boxed the compass of opinion that it was difficult for them to say anything without contradicting what they had said before; but if an unhappy prophet or Psalmist seemed to contradict himself he became two, or even more than, two men. He would end by professing his profound belief that when the latest heresy, like the oldest, had sunk in the waters of oblivion, the Bible would still shine as the one unfailing celestial source of truth and peace and salvation for all the many millions of mankind."

The following sensible remarks are by

THE REV. DR. HART, DEAN OF DENVER.

"So far from the narratives of Genesis conflicting with the scientific conclusions of recent years, he held that they were more and more substantiated. The Dean urged that clergymen who had to deal with people constantly must make up their minds as to the truth of God's Word, or else they had better drop preaching altogether."

"If a man came and made him a promise and somebody said, 'That man is not reliable; he made a promise which he broke,' what confidence could he have in that man's promise? And if a man came along and said to him, 'the Bible has got statements in it which are not true,' he would sift those statements to the bottom, because an untrue statement in

the Bible would discredit the Word of God, upon which his whole foundation was founded."

"It was the glory of the Gospel that Jesus Christ said it was to be preached to the poor; and all that he could add was that if Higher Critics and people of that sort were the only people going to populate heaven, he did not particularly want to be there."

THE REV. PROF. WESTROPP ROBERTS, TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

"The Higher Criticism and Science had often made them pause, and had brought doubts and difficulties before them, but those who had found Christ, who had felt the Spirit of Christ in them and abiding in them, had no fears; they were assured of His presence, and with St. Paul they could say, 'We know.'"

The very well-known representative English clergyman,

THE REV. DR. WACE, DEAN OF CANTERBURY,

"Said it was with much regret that he felt obliged to offer a strong opposition not only to a great deal of what had been said by the writers of the papers respecting the Old Testament but to the main principles that they had assumed.

"He expressed the hope that the universal belief of the Jewish and Christian churches for two thousand years, respecting their sacred Scriptures, might still be allowed a hearing in an assembly of the Anglican Church. Strongly upholding the traditional view of the Bible, he pointed out that two hundred years before our Lord, the Jews regarded the books of the Old Testament, as we now had them, as con-

taining the inspired record of their history, and entertained the same general view of that history as had prevailed in their own church until quite modern times."

"The real question was whether they wrote, on the authority of loose, popular reminiscences, or, as might be reasonably supposed, on the basis of ancient documents."

"The traditional view was that the compilation was made under the superintending influence of God's Spirit guiding the writers to the essence of the history."

"THE NARRATIVE IN THE BIBLE

represented God as the great author and inspirer of His own revelation, not leaving men gradually to find Him out as they would discover principles of science or of ethics, or of theology, but Himself finding them out, entering personally into relations of covenant with them from the very outset of revelation in the person of Abraham, and leading them on by successive words, promises, rebukes, disclosures, to know him better, to trust and to follow Him.

"It was all the difference between a natural evolution and a positive supernatural education. If they were wrong in their conceptions of the order of the Divine revelation, their authority as spiritual teachers was dangerously, if not fatally, shaken. But he submitted that they had abundant reason, alike in the best criticisms and in the most striking archæological discoveries of their day, for adhering firmly to the old belief and in trusting the Bible's own plain account of the history of God's people."

The well-known

CANON R. B. GIRDLESTONE,

states: "Jews and Christians agreed in accepting the Old Testament as having been in existence, substantially as we had it now, since the second or third century B.C.

"In assuming the substantial integrity of the books, they parted company with those who considered themselves at liberty to discredit or at least suspect any passage which contained a miracle or a distinct prophecy to bring down dates and alter texts at will, and to give attent on discrepancies and supposed mistaken repetitio. rather than on the grand proportions of the Books as a whole. More time should be given to the books than to the criticisms. The mission of Christ presupposes, accounted for and endorsed the Old Testament narrative and record as a whole."

DR. COPLESTONE, THE BISHOP OF CALCUTTA,

"Pleaded for longer hesitation before the Church accepted, especially in the extremer forms, the conclusions of the critics; not because he was afraid of them, but because he did not believe they had been proved. These editors, when their work was looked at in detail, were found at one time incredibly careless in leaving things unadjusted, at another, incredibly shrewd, not to say wily, in adjusting them; while on a large scale they displayed in selection a genius which would be itself a miracle.

"The Jewish Bible as it stood, say, fifty years before our Lord came, was in itself a product far be-

yond anything else that existed in the world, and in the light of its fulfilment it was seen to be a miracle greater than any that it recorded a wonder unexplainable a sign of divine revelation, a work of Almighty power, able to make men wise unto salvation."

The world-wide reputation as an historian of

THE REV. W. H. GRIFFITH THOMAS, D.D., PRINCIPAL OF WYCLIFFE COLLEGE, OXFORD,

gives great weight to his statements.

"The right of Old Testament criticism is one thing; the validity of Old Testament criticism is quite another. In spite of having to be regarded as unthinking and prejudiced they believe that the critical position in general and the documentary hypothesis in particular, as usually stated, are almost entirely untenable.

"At the back of all questions concerning documents is the fundamental problem: Is Israel's religion a human evolution or a Divine revelation.

"It is in the History that the purpose is displayed, and it is impossible to deny the trustworthiness of the history without thereby denying the reality of the Divine purpose embodied therein. As it has been well said: 'a theory which turns a living history into patchwork is not a priori reasonable.'"

"It is scarcely possible to separate the literary from the religious problem for in many cases the decisions arrived at on literary grounds are almost entirely controlled by the view taken of the origin and development of the religion."

"The next question is as to the tenableness of the documentary hypothesis itself. The 'assured results'

are by no means assured, but are in a state of almost continual movement. Thus, the train of reasoning in so recent a book as Driver's Genesis (p. 28, F.F.) as to the chronology of the Priestly Code, has been completely refuted by a recent discovery which has vindicated the accuracy of the Biblical data. Bishop Stubbs, who ought to have known the rules of historical evidence, says that 'the fact that Holy Scripture is like no other book,' has led critics to apply to it methods of arbitrary, wanton and conjectural criticism which if applied to Greek or Roman, or even Anglo-Saxon literature, would be laughed out of court."

"The evidence of archæology is also to the point. Not only has it not made a single contribution in support of the essential principles of the Old Testament critical school, but it has provided not a few which support the traditional position. One after another of the leading archæologists have given up their adhesion to the Wellhausen school and have become its resolute opponents."

"One who is himself a Higher Critic says that 'it is not possible for the ordinary mind to follow the patient and intricate processes of historical criticism. . . . In speaking to the people the preacher must take the Old Testament as it stands or else leave it alone.' (Robertson Nicoll.) Certainly the preaching of the new view would give an idea of the Old Testament very different from that held by our Lord and His Apostles."

"We contend that the new view of the Old Testament not only does not solve the many outstanding

problems, but raises still more than it solves. As Dr. Plummer says: 'It is not contended that no difficulties are presented by the history as it stands. What is denied is that what has been called the 'Destructive Criticism' has found a way out of them. On the contrary it involves us in far greater difficulties than it removes.''

''For these reasons, therefore, we maintain an attitude of opposition to the critical position, and we still wait for critics of the first rank to face in detail and vanquish the positions maintained in such books as 'Robertson's Early Religion of Israel,' the same author's 'Poetry and Religion of the Psalms,' and Orr's 'Problem of the Old Testament.' These, and other books, have never yet been dealt with as they deserve and demand by leading critics of the opposite school. Meanwhile those who know what the Old Testament has been to the Jewish Church and the Christian Church in all ages, the trustworthy embodiment, progressively revealed, of the Divine purpose for the world, will continue to hold fast to the traditional view more convinced than ever as they continue to study the critical position that 'the old is better.' ''

THE BISHOP OF ZANZIBAR

asks this most important question:

''How in the face of prevalent Bible criticism they were to teach the Bible to people who had just come out of barbarism or how were they to speak of the Bible to, say, Mohammedans in Africa? They were bound to be definite. How were the Higher Critics going to teach the Bible to heathen people? How were they

to teach it to young African clergy, when they did not know what Professor this and Doctor that would say about it next year. What was wanted in the Foreign Mission Field was facts and not vague, fluctuating theories."

THE REV. DR. JELF, MASTER OF THE CHARTER HOUSE,

offered this message to "quiet people, with no special ability for criticism, shy of hearing their own voice, sometimes troubled by the many voices around, but who yet deeply venerated and daily searched their Bible. None of them who reverenced the Scriptures need be debarred from some share of that criticism of them which consisted in knowledge, comparison, inward digestion, memory and love. These were fruits of Holy Writ itself. 'When thy word goeth forth, it giveth light and understanding unto the simple.' It was not cleverness but faith which held the key of the Scriptures and the key was Christ himself."

THE REV. H. J. R. MARSTON

stated: "If a good deal of what he had read in some recent German writers were true, it was certain that much of what was called humanization of the Bible was rather caricaturization of the Bible.

"If there was anything that struck him about the New Testament it was its incomparability. The New Testament had only the slightest common measure between itself and any other body of literature. While the New Testament remained, as it had so long remained, apparently the unique and mysterious acme of human thought and human language, he thought

they were not bound to look with special gratitude upon the achievements of the method of comparison between the New Testament and other books of religion. On one point they could never capitulate—the Divine and supreme authority of the written word, which taught the unpalatable doctrines of human guilt and the revelation of God which justifies the sinner in Jesus Christ alone."

The saintly,

THE REV. PREBENDARY H. W. WEBB-PEPLOE, LONDON,

referred to a letter, "the last words of which were as follow: 'Can nothing more be done than is being done to arrest the progress of these critical teachers? The Church seems to be handing herself over to the tyranny of the Professors.' The whole question of Bible criticism seems to hang upon what they understood by inspiration. In the deep sense of the word inspiration meant what St. Paul said, that 'Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' If the Holy Ghost moved men of the Old Testament, what would the Christians say concerning men of the New Testament? He maintained that to upset by criticism the faith of men in Jesus Christ, in any one single iota of His Being or revelation, was to destroy that which was their fountain head of hope, their assurance of blessing in Eternity, and their power for holiness of life even now. Christ Jesus was Himself the Living Word, and the whole book, called the Bible, was the written word concerning Him. Therefore the Bible was," Mr. Webb-Peploe claimed, "not as it were an instrument for criticism, but a revelation of

God manifest in the flesh for the salvation of man."

I trust that you and other good friends who read these wise statements and counsels, will be thereby strengthened in the determination, while thanking and blessing God for His Divine revelation to us, to stand up for that Word of God which was given by God to us in order that it might lead us up to Him.

Faithfully yours in the Blessed Hope,

S. H. BLAKE.

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